

# CAECILIA.

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### Chronicle and Comment.

By A. L.

The July-August issue of the *Caecilia* received a very favorable notice in the columns of the *St. Louis Amerika*. Mr. Arthur Preuss, the editor-in-chief of the *Amerika*, paid the *Caecilia* and its veteran editor, Prof. J. Singenberger, what the *Wanderer* of St. Paul, which reproduced *Amerika's* notice, calls a well-deserved tribute. The *Caecilia* has now more than half completed the 48th year of its existence. What this means and has meant during all these years in terms of courage, patience, sacrifice, and idealism on the part of its founder and publisher, Prof. Singenberger, is known and appreciated by none better than by men who, like the editors of the above mentioned journal, have for many years tasted the bittersweet of staunch and uncompromising Catholic journalism in this country. These men know what it means to uphold a good cause against discouraging odds. And as regards particularly the *Fortnightly Review*, we wish to say in passing that its editor, Mr. Arthur Preuss, has always taken a remarkably intelligent interest in all that pertains to Catholic Church music and the promotion of liturgical life in the United States. During all the 27 years of its existence, Mr. Preuss' *Review*, under the various heads of "Chronicle," "Comment," "Musical Review," etc., has given powerful reinforcement to the work done *ex professo* for the cause of Catholic liturgical music by the *Caecilia*. It is but a matter of justice to make record of this here and now for the benefit of such readers of the *Caecilia* as may not be readers of the *Fortnightly Review* of St. Louis.

A great new organ was presented to the Pontifical Institute of Church Music at Rome by Mrs. Justine Ward and Miss Robbins, both of New York City. The solemn dedication of the organ took place on July 25th and became the occasion of a notable gathering and ceremony, five Cardinals and many other prelates and musicians being present. Cardinal Bisleti blessed the organ, and Maestro Manari gave a concert. An

organ presented to the Pontifical Institute of Church Music by Pope Pius X was destroyed some years ago by a fire and explosion that wrecked the quarters in which the school was formerly located. May the new organ meet with better luck. We congratulate the Roman Pontifical Institute of Church Music on its good fortune in being able to bask and thrive in the sunshine of American munificence.

The promotion of Catholic church musicians to high ecclesiastical dignity is not of such frequent occurrence that we can afford to omit the following notices referring to events of recent date.

Rev. Dr. R. Bornebasser, director of the Gregorius-Haus at Aachen, Germany, was raised to the dignity of auxiliary-bishop of the archdiocese of Cologne. The Gregorius-Haus is the official school of Church music of the archdiocese of Cologne.

Dom Laurent Janssens, abbot of the Benedictine monastery of San Anselmo at Rome and distinguished Gregorian scholar and theologian, was named titular bishop of Bethsaida. His consecration took place at the monastery of San Anselmo, Cardinal van Rossum officiating.

Rt. Rev. Dr. J. N. Ahle, a Cecilian composer of note and at one time vice-president and official censor of the German Cecilian Society, was appointed Dean of the Cathedral Chapter of Augsburg, Bavaria. Immediately after the formal ceremonies of his installation, Dr. Ahle celebrated a Solemn High Mass at which time the Cathedral choir, under direction of choirmaster Reiser, sang a program consisting in part of compositions by the Rev. celebrant himself. Dr. Ahle has deserved well of the German Cecilian Society. To its interests he devoted his best efforts for more than 30 years, during the greater part of which time he was an acknowledged leader in the Society's councils on account of his deep learning, admirable tact, mature judgment, winning personality, and persuasive eloquence. We congratulate him upon his new honor, of which he is so deserving a recipient, and we wish him a hearty *Ad multos annos*.

If press reports may be believed, clergymen, sextons, organists and all other persons employed by churches come under the provisions of the Pennsylvania Workmen's Compensation Law and must be insured by the churches where they are employed. In this respect churches are in the same class as owners of railroads, factories, and coal mines. The accident insurance is a protection in case of disability and compensates the victim's family in case of fatal accident.

This legislation plainly opens the door to possibilities upon which we leave it to the reader to speculate. We would add as our observation, however, that, even apart from a consideration of such peculiar dangers to life and limb as may be lurking in the sanctuaries and organ lofts of Pennsylvania churches, it may become necessary before long in some other parts of this country to classify the work of clergymen and organists among the so-called "hazardous" occupations. If working for starvation wages is not a hazard, what is?

Scaffolding used in the erection of a new organ in Sacred Heart Church, Heron Lake, Minn., gave way recently, sending two men to their death and leaving two others severely injured. The men killed were members of the parish who had volunteered their services for the day. In this case, Fate was kind to the local organist, who was not involved in the tragedy, as he or she might have been, had this thing happened—in Pennsylvania.

It's a far cry from Minnesota to Mexico City. Still, what is distance to a chronicler, especially to one living in this age of universal relativity? After having emerged from a fierce persecution, with the principal phases of which the reader is supposed to be familiar, the Church in Mexico is again functioning tolerably well. Not one of the least indications of this is the fact that, since the year 1920, several dioceses down there have issued decrees and regulations on Church music. We are interested at present in an article that appeared on Aug. 7th, this year, in the Spanish *Excelsior* of Mexico City under the bold-lettered heading, *El canto profano no se debe seguir escuchando en los templos de Mexico*,—"Profane song should be heard no longer in the churches of Mexico." The article is based upon an interview with three prominent priests of Mexico City. The reporter's line of questioning was substantially as follows: Are the ecclesiastical regulations on Church music being complied

with in the archdiocese? If not, why not? It seems that a decree on Church music, issued by the Metropolitan Mitra some time in January, 1920, had not brought the desired results. Therefore it was decided to give this decree the necessary reinforcement in the form of new "admonitions" (amonestaciones) issued some months ago. Hence the curiosity of the *Excelsior*'s reporter, as shown above.

Rev. Dr. Tritschler, the first to be interviewed, admitted the fact of a rather general indifference in the archdiocese towards efforts to reform Church music. But, realizing that he was speaking for publication, he showed a decided disinclination to particularize as to the causes of this indifference further than to say that the principal cause was the archdiocese's lack of a school of Church music, such as existed at Queretaro. (Note.—This school of Church music at Queretaro owed its origin to two graduates of the Regensburg School of Church music of the year 1889—to Rev. José María Velasquez and Sr. Agustín Gonzales.) Dr. Tritschler also intimated that it was not fair to measure the progress of Church music reform in Mexico by what has been achieved in the same sphere of endeavor in Europe; and he gave two reasons for his contention, the first being that Mexico was not able to compete culturally with such countries as Germany and France, and the second, that Germany, through her great organization of Cecilian societies, and France, through the restoration of Gregorian melody by the Benedictines, had both anticipated, by several decades, the reform movement inaugurated by the *Motu Proprio* of Pope Pius X.

Padre Barandica, who was the next to be interviewed, was even more cautious and non-committal. Evading the subject of Church music in Mexico, he freely discoursed on the Church music in Europe, dispensing some more or less harmless generalities, which it is to no purpose to reproduce here.

It remained for Rev. Dr. A. Pardavé, the secretary of the archdiocesan musical commission, to meet the issue squarely. His account of the progress of Church music reform down there is as follows: "We have accomplished quite a number of things. The use of pianos in the churches has been suppressed; the opera bouffe music once performed is rarely heard now, and in some dioceses like Michoacan, Linares, Tulancingo, and Queretaro the orchestra has been definitely banished. But, certainly, in the mat-

ter of reintroducing the traditional Gregorian Chant and mediaeval polyphony, the wishes of the Holy Father have not been met. Nor has any importance been attached to the singing of the people at the liturgical offices as a means of instilling fervor into the faithful and of enhancing the solemnity of the ceremonies of the Church.

"The indolence of our character is one of the causes that have retarded the progress we should have made in this matter according to the wishes of the Holy Father. We lack real enthusiasm; we do things, but in a cold and languid sort of way.

"Another cause is the absence of a right spirit in persons who call themselves Catholics, but who, at heart, do not submit themselves to the will of the Church.

"Still another cause is the prejudice found among persons, otherwise pious and fervent, who think that the question of Church music is not so important simply because there are other things of greater moment and interest to them. But, whoever understands the life of the Church, as manifested in the liturgy, knows how intimately music is connected with it, and also, how true is the saying of Cardinal Bona, *Mutabis musicam, mutabis mores*, which means that custom, piety, and the Christian spirit are greatly influenced by music.

"And there is perhaps the chief cause of our slow progress, namely, the difficulty intrinsic to music itself, a difficulty to which the Holy Father refers in his *Motu Proprio*. (Note.—Fr. Pardavé here quotes verbatim the paragraph of the *Motu Proprio* in which the variable and fluctuating nature of musical art and the successive changes of taste, custom, etc., are spoken of as causes of the decadence of Church Music.)

"Another cause—I say this with great sorrow—is the following: For 15 years we have been looking forward longingly here in Mexico to the establishment of a school of sacred music; but, on account of the state in which the Church finds herself here, it is not possible to found such a school. The Church, as anyone can see is oppressed and deprived of her freedom; and with her freedom has gone much of the splendor with which her public worship was invested at other periods in the past. However, if we but show a real determination to do the right thing in the matter of Church music, we are capable of complying with the wishes of the Holy See." . . .

Thus far Dr. Pardavé. And the scribe of the Mexican *Excelsior* rounds off his symposium of the views of these three ecclesiastics by adding a few observations of his own. Being a man of the world, he naturally was greatly shocked by all the musical disification he received in the many or few Catholic churches in which he ever set foot. Hence he perorates as follows: "Who, upon entering a Catholic church, has not at some time or other heard music evocative of concert memories? Who has not at some time assisted at a nuptial ceremony and there listened to the singing of "romanzas" by Tosti, Mercadante, Trucci, Gounod, Faure, and other operatic composers?"

### Church Music in the Diocese of Bismarck, N. D.

In an official communication recently addressed to his clergy, Rt. Rev. Vincent Wehrle, O.S.B., bishop of Bismarck, N. D., *inter alia*, pointedly expresses himself on the subject of Church music, as follows:

"In some parishes the choir is still singing High Masses which are entirely against all Church laws. This must be stopped. Church music must be a prayer and not an exhibition of the operatic skill of some ladies and gentlemen. With episcopal authority we command that after January 1st, 1922, only such Masses be sung in the churches of our diocese, which are either Gregorian or on the list of Masses approved by the Church Music Commission of the Province of Milwaukee or by any other Church Music Commission that has the sanction of an American archbishop. If you find it impossible to have Gregorian Masses sung by your choir and difficult to select, write to the editor of *Cecilia*, St. Francis, Wis., and explain to him local conditions, or write to Father Slag, Bismarck, N. D.; these men will surely find for you some Masses, which are in conformity with the Church laws and will also please the congregation.

I most earnestly *beg* all priests to introduce the Gregorian Chant; I *command* that in all parishes with parochial schools the Gregorian Chant be used exclusively during Advent and Lent and at all High Masses on weekdays. It is my earnest desire and wish that Gregorian Chant be sung the whole year around, but I permit other Masses outside of Advent and Lent, provided such Masses be strictly in conformity with Church laws.

I also order that all priests send me the list of all Masses usually sung by their choirs, and also the list of the hymn books used in their parishes. This is to be done within the next three weeks.

Thanks to God, many parishes have in the past obeyed the Church laws in regard to Church music and have learned to love real Church music and especially Gregorian Chant; but others have been negligent and disobedient, priests as much as choirs.

During the coming winter I intend to invite organists of several parishes to Bismarck for a course of instruction in Gregorian Chant. I shall be glad if you let me know before November whether your own organist is willing to attend such a course."

### The Recitation Tone.

(Concluded.)

7. The recitation tone should be one that can be conveniently sung by the singers.

8. There should be conformity of key and pitch between the recitation tone and the chants connected with it. Thus, for example, if the Gradual is to be recited and the Alleluja sung, the Gradual ought to be recited in the mode and transposition of the Alleluja.

9. The ordinary and best adapted tone for the recitation is the tonic (*finalis*) of the respective mode; but in certain modes and some transpositions it is advisable to recite upon the dominant.

10. The organ accompaniment should be neither too loud nor too soft, so that the recitation will be intelligible even in the largest churches. The organist does not need to regard the *cæsurae* of the singers, but proceeds independently with the rhythmical accompaniment, which, however, should end simultaneously with the recitation.

11. Should the singer and organist be the same person, he would do well to memorize a few recitation cadences, or write the text below the cadence (a work admirably adapted to this purpose is "178 Recitation Cadences for Organ," by Joseph Schildknecht, op. 19. Pustet & Co. It affords the organist ample material for accompanying the recitation tone in a correct and truly ecclesiastical style.—Translator.)

A. M. D. G.

### Recensionen.

Haupttexte der gregorianischen Autoren betreffs Rhythmus-Kontext, Original und Uebersetzung, herausgegeben von J. G. Schmidt. (L. Schwann, Düsseldorf.)

Eine kleine praktische Schrift, die einem wirklichen Bedürfnisse entgegenkommt. Ihr Vorwort erklärt Zweck und Wichtigkeit: "Die mittelalterlichen Texte, welche des gregorianischen Gesanges von grösster Wichtigkeit sind, stehen in verschiedenen Büchern und Aufsätzen zerstreut; dort finden sie sich vielfach nur bruchstückweise und aus dem Kontext gerissen vor. Will man die Stellen in Zusammenhang zu Rate ziehen, so muss man zu grossen und kostspieligen Werken greifen, die zum Teil schwer erreichbar sind. Eine Zusammenstellung der hauptsächlichsten dieser jedem Kirchenmusiker, der vollständig urteilen will, durchaus notwendigen Urkunden wird also bei ihrer genügenden Vollständigkeit und ihrem niedrigen Kaufpreis sicherlich willkommen sein."

Die Texte sind, soweit sie in der Frage von Belang sind, zusammenhängend und vollständig wiedergegeben im lateinischen Original mit gegenüberstehender deutscher Uebersetzung. Wir vernehmen da den hl. Augustinus, Aurelian von Réomé, Remigius von Auxerre, Huchbald, Guido von Arezzo, Berno von Reichenau, Aribi Scholasticus und einen Anonymus der Vatikanischen Bibliothek.

Kommentar oder Kontroversdiskussionen werden nicht geboten. Die Dokumente sprechen allein, ihre Sprache ist aber in der Hauptsache so klar und eindeutig, dass jeder aufmerksame Leser sich wundern wird, wie es nur möglich war Jahrzehnte lang über das von den gregorianischen Musikschriftstellern sozusagen auf der flachen Hand dargebotene Wesen des Choralrhythmus zu streiten. Die rein objektiv gehaltene Schrift kann jedem aufrichtig die Wahrheit suchenden Kirchenmusiker, welcher Schule er auch angehören mag, nur willkommen sein. Ihr Preis ist in Deutschland 2 Mark; für Amerika mit Zuschlägen etwa 10-15 Cents.

Soeben vernehmen wir, dass obige Schrift auch in einer englischen Ausgabe mit folgendem Titel erscheint: Principal Texts of the Gregorian Authors concerning Rhythm-Context. Original and Translation. Edited by J. G. Schmidt. (Buffalo Volksfreund, 10c).

Ludwig Bonvin S. J.

